Safeguarding Adults Policy

Reviewed: July 2026

Next review: July 2027

1 Introduction

This policy will enable Autism Berkshire to demonstrate its commitment to keeping safe the adults at risk with whom it works alongside. Autism Berkshire acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

The Policy Statement and Procedures have been drawn up in order to enable Autism Berkshire to:

- promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring.
- to ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported.
- and to stop that abuse occurring.

2 Definitions

The Policy and Procedures relate to the safeguarding of adults at risk defined as:

- A person aged 18 or over who is in need of care and support regardless of whether they are receiving them, and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect.
- Adult safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Adult safeguarding lead is the title given to the member of staff in an organisation who is given the lead for Safeguarding Adults.

The policy applies to all staff, including trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, students and anyone working on behalf of Autism Berkshire.

Autism Berkshire is committed to the belief that the Safeguarding of Adults is everybody's responsibility.

3 Principles of the policy and procedures

The policy and procedures are based on The Six Principles of Safeguarding that underpin all adult safeguarding work.

Empowerment	Adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information.	I am consulted about the outcomes I want from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens
Prevention	Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect that promotes resilience and self-determination.	I am provided with easily understood information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help
Proportionate	A proportionate and least intrusive response is made balanced with the level of risk.	I am confident that the professionals will work in my interest and only get involved as much as needed
Protection	Adults are offered ways to protect themselves, and there is a co-ordinated response to adult safeguarding.	I am provided with help and support to report abuse. I am supported to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want and to which I am able
Partnerships	Local solutions through services working together within their communities.	I am confident that information will be appropriately shared in a way that takes into account its personal and sensitive nature. I am confident that agencies will work together to find the most effective responses for my own situation
Accountable	Accountability and transparency in delivering a safeguarding response.	I am clear about the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the solution to the problem

The Care Act 2014 and Guidance state that safeguarding:

- Is person led.
- Engages the person from the start, throughout and at the end to address their needs.
- Is outcome focused.
- Is based upon a community approach from all partners and providers.

Autism Berkshire is commissioned by Local Authorities to deliver projects on their behalf. Autism Berkshire will comply with the ***Berkshire multi-agency adult safeguarding policy and procedures*** Home Of Berkshire Safeguarding For Adults (berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk) which are built on strong multi-agency partnerships working together, with adults to prevent abuse and neglect where possible, and provide a consistent approach when responding to safeguarding concerns. This entails joint accountability for the management of risk, timely information sharing, co-operation and a collegiate approach that respects boundaries and confidentiality

within legal frameworks.

4 Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Autism Berkshire is committed to ensuring that all staff, trustees and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse. Autism Berkshire will ensure that the Adults Safeguarding Lead and other members of staff, trustees and volunteers have access to training around Safeguarding Adults.

Abuse includes:

- physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint
- sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material
- psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation
- financial or material abuse: including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs
- discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- institutional or organisational: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment

Signs of Abuse include:

- the person may tell you
- the person may say something that worries you
- you may see something – an incident or an injury or other sign
- You might see and/or hear something happen:
- someone being bullied or intimidated
- someone being made to feel frightened or unhappy
- someone in a situation of unnecessary risk

The person or somebody else might say something that gives cause for concern, for example:

- a colleague
- family member
- member of the public

There might be physical signs or unexplained or unusual injuries:

- bruises
- slap marks
- black eyes
- bleeding
- burns or scalding
- cigarette marks
- torn, stained or blood stained clothes

There may be other signs such as:

- inappropriate, dirty or soiled clothes
- no food or drink available for the person
- bills not being paid or services, e.g. telephone cut off
- shortage of money

The person might say things or behave in a way that causes you concern:

- the person may seem unhappy or distressed
- the person may appear frightened, anxious or agitated without an obvious cause, or in relation to certain people
- sleeping problems
- constant visits to the toilet without a medical reason
- other unexplained changes in how the person behaves

The behaviour of a colleague or other person might cause concern:

- dismissive or intolerant attitude
- task / routine orientated rather than person focused
- not a team player; insists on doing tasks on their own or in their way; secretive about contact with clients
- oversteps professional boundaries with clients and colleagues, maybe overfriendly; neglects professional development

You may not *know*. It is enough that you are worried.

5 Preventing abuse

Autism Berkshire is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services it offers and that all those involved within Autism Berkshire will be treated with respect.

Service users will be encouraged to become involved with the running of the organisation. Information will be available about abuse and the complaints policy and Safeguarding Adults policy statement will be available to service users and their carers/families.

5.1 Recruitment and HR procedures

Autism Berkshire selection of paid staff and volunteers is designed with Safeguarding at its heart to recruit staff and volunteers who are suitable for the role. Recruitment shall comply with the HR and Recruitment Policies.

- Paid Staff and Volunteers shall be recruited against a job or role description.
- During the application process, candidates will be required to sign an application form which includes questions about past convictions and pending cases.
- Individuals will be interviewed by a trained panel of at least two people, motivation and gaps in employment will be explored.
- **All** candidates who are offered a role will be subjected to an enhance check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), according to the workforce role and references will be checked.
- If Autism Berkshire removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after adults at risk (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

5.2 Training procedures

All new staff and volunteers will be familiarised with this Policy as part of their induction training programme and at least annually or in the event of a new version of this Policy being published. Existing staff and volunteers will receive update training annually.

5.3 'Whistle blowing' procedures

If a member of staff or a volunteer has any concerns about the actions and attitude of the Safeguarding Lead, they should report the matter to the Chair of Trustees of Autism Berkshire. If all internal routes are exhausted, then individuals can 'whistle blow' to the Independent Chair of the Adults Safeguarding Board (ASB). See policy.

6 Radicalisation and Prevent

At Autism Berkshire we understand the need to safeguard our service users, staff and volunteers from the risk of radicalisation of any type. We recognise our responsibility to participate in such work and to safeguard the welfare of people by committing to practice in a way which prevents and protects people from being drawn into terrorism.

Staff and volunteers must report any concerns around extremism or radicalisation via our safeguarding reporting channels.

In order to safeguard against radicalisation, Autism Berkshire will promote and reinforce values of openness and respect, tolerance, cohesion and equality of opportunity and treatment by:

- Creating space for free and open debate; and by listening, valuing and respecting individual voices.
- Breaking down barriers and supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding.
- Making sure that the Charity is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Providing support for those who may be at risk of radicalisation by providing appropriate sources of advice and guidance
- Making sure that staff and learners are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent extremism. All staff, Trustees and volunteers are required to successfully complete mandatory Prevent eLearning on an annual basis. New members of staff, volunteers and Trustees will receive this training as part of their induction.

7 Health and Safety

All paid staff and volunteers volunteering in Autism Berkshire buildings, or on the premises where an Autism Berkshire event is being held, are to be given a Health and Safety induction. All paid staff and volunteers in the course of representing Autism Berkshire are covered by the organisation's Public Liability Insurance. We endeavour to ensure that any events which paid staff and volunteers are asked to attend on behalf of Autism Berkshire are safe and accessible. This is achieved through the prior completion of risk assessments at Autism Berkshire organised events and in some cases written confirmation of appropriate insurance cover at third party organised events.

8 Contacts

In life threatening situations and emergencies the Police should be called
Tel: 999

In an emergency, the Police can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

AND the following should be informed in ANY reportable event:

Safeguarding Lead	CEO	Jane Stanford-Beale Mobile 07795 807 249
Safeguarding Deputy	Trainer and Family Support Lead	Julia Cox Office 01189 594 594
	Safeguarding Trustee	*Conor O'Connor*

		Office 01189 594 594
Whistleblowing	*Chair of Trustees*	*Conor O'Connor* *Office 01189 594 594*

The Safeguarding Lead will follow the local process reporting for reporting concerns.

9 Changes to version

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the CEO and the named Safeguarding Trustee. The policy will then be endorsed by the board and this action will be minuted. Approved by the board of trustees July 2025.

Date	**Major or Minor**	**Reason for change**	**Change**
25/5/17 3.1	Minor	Recommendation from Safe and Sound assessment	Under s 4 included Signs of Abuse from Safeguarding Adults Board
15/04/18	Minor	Suggestion from trustee	Added emergencies to section 7
15/4/18	Minor	Change of staff	Removed Tracy White and added Georgie Mitchell for Safeguarding Deputy
31/05/20 3.4 23/07/213.5	Minor Minor	Change of Trustee Change of staff Change of website location for SAB procedures	Added Chair of Trustees contacts list for Whistleblowing Removed Georgie Mitchell and added Julia Cox for Safeguarding Deputy
September 2021	No change	No change	Review as part of Safe and Sound re-inspection by RVA no changes recommended
16/2/22 3.6	Minor	Change of SafeguardingTrustee and Chair of Trustees	Removed Sandra Stubbs and added Conor O'Connor as Safeguarding Trustee, removed Richard Flemming and added Conor O'Connor as Chair of Trustees
05 July 2022 3.7	Annual	Annual Review	No changes identified.
24 July 2023 3.8	Annual	Annual Review	No changes identified.
31 July 2024 3.9	Annual	Annual Review	No changes identified.
4/7/25	Annual	Annual Review	No identified changes.
24/7/25	Add Prevent	Major change	Add Section 6 Radicalisation and Prevent
6/7/26	Annual	Monr changes	Logo and version details changed. Need new Safeguarding and Whistleblowing trustee details.

Annex 1: Safeguarding Incident Form

Safeguarding Incident Form

Please complete as much of the following as possible

Name of person

Age and date of birth (if a child) Ethnicity

Any special factors

Parent's/carer's name(s)

Home address (and phone no. if available).

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times etc. of any specific incidents.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the person? If so, what was said?

Have you spoken to the parent(s)/ carers ? If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.

Have you consulted anybody else? Give details.

Your name and position.

In what capacity have you had any contact with the person

To whom reported and date of reporting.

Signature Today's date

If the incident is highlighted via Social media or email, print off the information and attach to this form.

All paperwork to be given to your line manager who then will report the incident to the **Safeguarding Lead for action. Safeguarding Lead is the CEO of the charity. The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is the Family Support Lead.**